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TL 9127

Declaration on behalf of East Timor

Dear Friends,

Your support is earnestly requested for the Declaration on behalf of East Timor printed below.

The Declaration has been prepared by Lord Avebury, Chairman of the Parliamentary Human Rights Group in the British Parliament. It received the full support of an international conference on East Timor held at the Catholic Institute for International Relations in London in January.

In 1976 Indonesia integrated East Timor without any act of self-determination. Since then resistance has continued and the people have suffered many privations and human rights violations giving rise to widespread international concern.

In 1982 the UN General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to 'initiate consultations with all parties directly concerned, with a view to exploring avenues for achieving a comprehensive settlement of the problem'.

Since then consultations have taken place under the Secretary-General's auspices but have involved only Portugal and Indonesia. The principal party to the conflict, the East Timorese people, has been excluded. The Declaration challenges this state of affairs in the belief, to quote Lord Avebury, that 'any negotiations that do not include representatives of the Timorese people will fail to produce a lasting solution'.

In this the Declaration concurs with the Catholic Church in East Timor. In December 1984 the Head of the East Timorese Church, Mgr Belo, wrote to the Secretary of the French Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace, Fr Pierre Toulat: **'Despite all forces against us, we continue to hold and disseminate that the only solution to the East Timor conflict is a political and diplomatic one, and this solution should include, above all, the respect for the right of a people for self-determination . . . As long as this is not implemented, there will not be a peaceful solution for East Timor'.**

The Christians in Solidarity with East Timor committee (based in Melbourne, Australia) is circulating the Declaration to churches and church organisations in Australia, Asia and the Pacific, inviting their endorsement. CISET will present the Declaration and the names of those who endorse it to the Christian Conference of Asia Assembly in Seoul in June 1985. The Declaration and a list of its supporters will also be publicised.

Please return the signed Declaration to CISET, PO Box 1092, North Fitzroy 3068, Australia, no later than May 31, 1985.

Declaration on behalf of East Timor

Recognising that the territory of East Timor has been illegally occupied by Indonesia since December 1975, inflicting extreme loss of life and destruction;

Recognising that the Indonesian policy to isolate East Timor prevents the ICRC and other relief and development agencies from reaching those in need, and denies the international community opportunities to assess the wishes of the people independently;

Condemning the human rights violations committed since 1975, as reported by church leaders in East Timor and by independent human rights organisations;

Recognising that the East Timorese have been denied their right to self-determination;

Welcoming, finally, UN General Assembly Resolution 37/30 which asked the UN Secretary-General 'to initiate consultations with all parties directly concerned, with a view to exploring avenues for achieving a comprehensive settlement of the problem', and acknowledging the steps which have been taken to bring Portugal and Indonesia into negotiations;

We affirm that negotiations will not lead to a just settlement unless they:

1. ***Involve representatives of the East Timorese people including those who resist the present occupation.***
2. ***Secure an end to hostilities which prevent the people of East Timor and their representatives from contributing freely to negotiations leading to self-determination.***
3. ***Provide internationally acceptable conditions of access to relief and development agencies and to independent visitors, journalists and diplomats.***
4. ***Include an act of self-determination, which is free from interference and verified by international observers acceptable to the East Timorese people.***

We commend all international initiatives which observe these principles, and will call upon our government to support actively a process of negotiation conducted on such terms.

We endorse the above Declaration.

Organisation _____

Address _____

Signature _____ **Position** _____